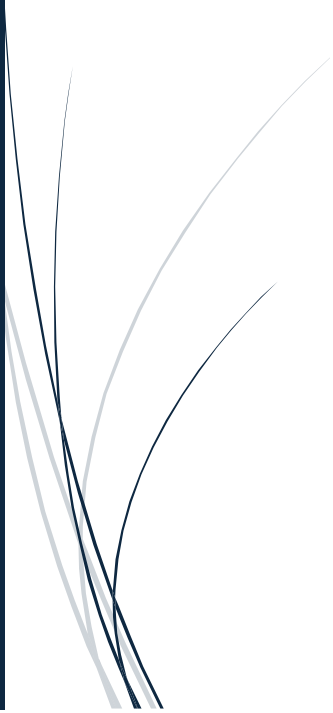
Fourfold Path to Freedom

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Seekers - East, West, and Beyond



Sham Sunder Rehlon

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Many of these reflections were first prepared and delivered by the author during satsangs for seekers of Shri Paramhans Advait Mat and shared through the WhatsApp groups Dhyan Ka Deepak, Naam Ka Deepak, and Naam Ka Deepak–Antardhwani, as part of 40-Day Meditation Training Festivals since 2020.

With the assistance of AI technology, these writings have now been classified and refined into book form, intended to be shared freely with all seekers. In keeping with the spiritual injunction that true knowledge is never to be sold, these books are offered completely free of cost, as a humble service to humanity.

Publisher's Note

This book is the outcome of decades of study and reflection on spiritual scriptures, texts, and traditions, including Vedic, Upanishadic, Sikhism, Santmat, Sufism, Stoicism and Bhakti literature. Its purpose is to provide insights into Dharma and the moral and ethical responsibilities of individuals. The text seeks to inspire understanding, reflection, and practical application of timeless principles, promoting selfless service, social justice, and spiritual growth.

Published by: **Rehlon Publications**
Author: **Sham Sunder Rehlon**
Contact: rehlon@yahoo.com | +91 9417038734
Address: S.A.S. Nagar (Mohali), Punjab, India

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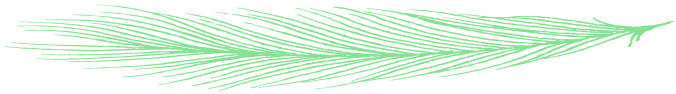


Preface

This booklet is a humble offering to seekers of all paths—a synthesis of timeless wisdom that illuminates the true aim of human life. At its heart lies the ancient framework of the Four Purusharthas: Dharma (righteous living), Artha (ethical prosperity), Kaam (disciplined desire), and Moksha (liberation). These four treasures, articulated in the Vedas and Upanishads, form a complete map of human striving—guiding the soul through worldly engagement toward spiritual transcendence.

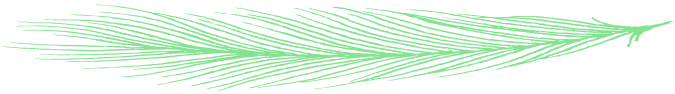
Dharma is the foundation—the compass of truth, compassion, and duty that aligns life with cosmic order. Artha, the pursuit of wealth, is sanctified when earned through honest labor and used for service and upliftment. Kaam, the fulfillment of desire, becomes a force for creativity and devotion when tempered by Dharma. And Moksha, the crown of human life, is the soul's release from bondage, its union with the Eternal.

These Purusharthas are not isolated goals but an integrated path. The Bhagavad Gita affirms that action rooted in Dharma and surrendered to the Divine leads naturally to Moksha. The Upanishads whisper of renunciation without denial—"tena tyaktena bhunjitha"—renounce attachment, yet enjoy life fully.

Sikhism offers a luminous reinterpretation of this framework. Guru Granth Sahib Ji teaches that all four Padaraths are attained not through ritual or renunciation, but through Naam Simran, righteous living, and selfless service. Guru Nanak Dev Ji's vision is revolutionary: liberation is not reserved for ascetics, but is attainable by householders who walk the path of humility, remembrance, and surrender. The Sikh path integrates Dharma, Artha, Kaam, and Moksha into a single God-centered life.

Shri Paramhans Advait Mat deepens this vision through the Five Means of Devotion—Satsang, Simran, Dhyan, Bhajan, and Seva. These are not mere practices, but living disciplines that transform the seeker's consciousness. Through them, the soul moves from bondage to bliss, from desire to Divine longing, from ego to eternal union.

Western philosophy, too, echoes these truths. The Stoics taught detachment from passions and alignment with nature and reason. Plato envisioned the soul's ascent toward the Good; Aristotle described human flourishing through virtue and balance. These voices affirm that ethical living, disciplined desire, and contemplation of the eternal are universal paths to inner freedom.



This booklet is not for sale, but for seva—freely offered to devotees, disciples, and spiritual aspirants who seek clarity, courage, and companionship on the path. May it serve as a mirror to the soul, a bridge between traditions, and a call to awaken to the true aim of human life.

The Four Purusharthas: A Map of Human Life

Human life, across civilizations, has always been guided by questions of purpose and meaning. In the ancient Hindu tradition, these questions find a systematic expression in the concept of the **Four Purusharthas**—Dharma, Artha, Kaam, and Moksha. They form a holistic framework, guiding human existence ethically, materially, emotionally, and spiritually. Each Purushartha represents a dimension of life, and when followed in balance, they lead to the ultimate fulfillment of the soul.

The first Purushartha is **Dharma**, righteousness and ethical duty. Dharma forms the foundation of human life, providing moral and spiritual orientation. It encompasses truthfulness, compassion, justice, and adherence to one's duties in society and family. The **Bhagavad Gita (3:35)** emphasizes the primacy of Dharma: **"श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठितात्।"***Better is one's own dharma, though imperfect, than the dharma of another, even if performed perfectly.* Through Dharma, life gains direction, and actions become aligned with cosmic order, enabling the individual to live in harmony with society and the universe.

The second Purushartha is **Artha**, the pursuit of material prosperity and livelihood. Human beings require sustenance, security, and wealth to support themselves and their families. Artha is the energy of productivity, the fruits of honest labor, and the management of resources. However, Hindu philosophy

emphasizes that Artha must be pursued ethically and in accordance with Dharma. When wealth is used for personal comfort, service, charity, and societal well-being, it becomes a source of blessing rather than bondage.

The third Purushartha is **Kaam**, the fulfillment of desires, emotions, and pleasures. Kaam includes love, creativity, aesthetic enjoyment, and the natural urges that make life vibrant. Yet Kaam is not indulgence without control. When desires are guided by Dharma, they contribute to happiness and personal growth rather than leading to attachment and suffering. The **Kama Sutra** and Dharmashastras stress that Kaam, rightly understood, is a legitimate and vital dimension of human life.

The fourth and highest Purushartha is **Moksha**, liberation from the cycle of birth and death, and realization of the Self. Moksha transcends all worldly concerns, including Artha and Kaam, and even the structured duties of Dharma. It is the ultimate freedom, the union of the individual soul with the Absolute. The **Upanishads** repeatedly affirm this aim: **"तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा।"***Renounce attachment and yet enjoy life fully.* Here, Moksha is not the denial of life but liberation through detachment, self-realization, and awareness of the eternal Self.

The Four Purusharthas are not isolated pursuits but a **progressive, integrated path**. Dharma provides the ethical base; Artha sustains life materially; Kaam enriches life emotionally and aesthetically; Moksha culminates life spiritually. Hindu scriptures like the Bhagavad Gita emphasize

that action performed in accordance with Dharma, while remaining unattached to the fruits, leads naturally to Moksha (Gita 18:66). The teachings thus reconcile worldly engagement with spiritual liberation, showing that one can live fully and yet rise above the limitations of the temporal world.

Across centuries, the Four Purusharthas have guided seekers, householders, and saints alike. They offer a map of human life that balances duty, wealth, desire, and spiritual liberation. They caution against partial engagement—pursuing Artha or Kaam without Dharma leads to bondage; seeking Moksha without life's grounding can lead to imbalance. True fulfillment is achieved when all four are harmonized, allowing the human soul to thrive materially, emotionally, ethically, and ultimately, spiritually.

In essence, the Four Purusharthas present a **complete philosophy of life**: live righteously, earn and use wealth ethically, enjoy desires within discipline, and transcend all through self-realization. They teach that life is meant to be lived consciously, with purpose at every level, and that ultimate freedom, Moksha, is the crown of human aspiration.

The Philosophy of Chaar Padarath in Sikhism

In the spiritual vision of Sikhism, human life is not an accident of nature but a precious opportunity to realize the Divine. The Guru Granth Sahib again and again reminds us that life is given for a purpose, and this purpose can be understood through the framework of the **Chaar Padarath** — the four great attainments or treasures of life. These are **Dharma, Artha, Kaam, and Moksha**. While the concept of these four goals is also found in the ancient Indian tradition, Sikh philosophy gives them a distinctive interpretation, one that places the remembrance of the Divine Name at the center.

The first and most essential of these is **Dharma**. Dharma is not merely ritual or external morality, but the very foundation of righteous living. It is truthfulness, compassion, humility, service, and duty. In the Sikh tradition, Dharma is lived in the midst of the world, not in renunciation of it. Guru Nanak Dev Ji taught that the path of Dharma requires honest labor, sharing with others, and remembrance of God's Name. Without Dharma, the other three goals lose their meaning, for they become corrupted by ego, greed, and desire. It is Dharma that turns ordinary life into a sacred journey.

The second is **Artha**, the pursuit of wealth and prosperity. In Sikhism, Artha is not rejected but affirmed, with an

important qualification: it must be earned honestly and used wisely. Wealth is to be acquired not for self-indulgence but for service, charity, and the welfare of the community. Guru Nanak declared, *"ghāl khāe kichh hathahu de, Nanak rāhu pachhānahi seī"* — they alone find the path who earn by honest work and share with others. Thus, Artha becomes sanctified when rooted in Dharma.

The third goal is **Kaam**, the fulfillment of desires. Sikhism does not condemn desire, but it emphasizes that desire must remain under the guidance of Dharma. Human love, family life, and enjoyment of the world are not obstacles but opportunities to practice balance, discipline, and gratitude. When Kaam is pursued without Dharma, it leads to lust and bondage; when pursued with Dharma, it transforms into longing for the Divine and becomes a force for spiritual ascent.

The final and ultimate goal is **Moksha**, liberation. In the Sikh understanding, Moksha is freedom from ego, ignorance, and the cycle of birth and death. It is union with the Divine, realized not only after death but also while living — *jīvan-mukti*. Guru Nanak says, *"jīvan mukat so ākhīai, je mar jīvai mar jānai"* — the truly liberated one is he who dies to his ego while still alive, and lives in God. Liberation in Sikhism is not a flight from the world but a state of inner freedom, attained through the remembrance

of Naam, through living in Dharma, and through the grace of the Guru.

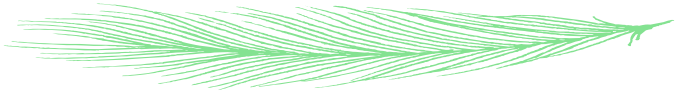
At the heart of this philosophy is the teaching that all four Padarath are obtained through **Naam** — the remembrance of the Divine. The Guru says: "*dharam arth kām mokh padārath nāme hī te pāe*" — Dharma, Artha, Kaam, Moksha are all attained only through Naam. In this way, Sikhism does not separate worldly life from spiritual life but integrates them. Dharma gives the root, Artha and Kaam are the branches, and Moksha is the fruit — but the life-giving sap that nourishes them all is the remembrance of God through Naam.

Thus, the Chaar Padarath in Sikhism form not just a list of goals but a philosophy of life. They teach us that Dharma must be the foundation of all actions; Artha and Kaam must be pursued in harmony with Dharma; and Moksha must remain the highest aspiration, the crown of human life. In this vision, the path of the Sikh is neither pure renunciation nor indulgence, but a balanced, integrated, and God-centered life. By living in the world yet rising above its entanglements, one fulfills all four Padarath and realizes the eternal Truth.

The Four Aims of Life in Western Thought

Human beings, regardless of time or culture, have always sought to understand the purpose of life and the principles that make it meaningful. In the West, particularly in Greek philosophy, a framework emerges that resonates closely with the Eastern concept of the Four Purusharthas, though expressed differently. Across philosophy, ethics, and practical living, Western wisdom emphasizes four key dimensions: ethical virtue, prosperity or well-being, moderated desire, and ultimate fulfillment of the soul.

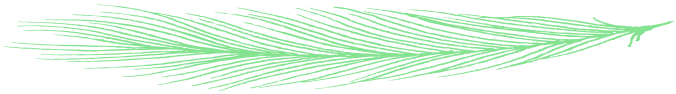
The first aim, **ethical virtue**, corresponds to Dharma in the East. Greek thinkers like Aristotle, Plato, and the Stoics stressed the cultivation of character and moral excellence as the foundation of a meaningful life. Aristotle's concept of **"virtue" (areté)** is central: life is to be lived in accordance with reason and moral excellence, balancing courage, temperance, justice, and wisdom. Plato, through the analogy of the philosopher ascending from the cave, emphasizes turning away from illusions and living in alignment with Truth and the Good. Similarly, the Stoics, such as Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, teach that the soul flourishes when it follows nature, reason, and universal law, cultivating detachment from passions and embracing ethical responsibility. Ethical virtue forms the root from which all other aims can emerge.



The second aim, akin to Artha, is **prosperity and well-being**—securing resources, stability, and flourishing in the material world. Aristotle terms this **"eudaimonia"**, often translated as flourishing or human well-being, which encompasses not only ethical living but also the practical necessities of life. Wealth, possessions, and external success are not despised but are to be sought in moderation, guided by virtue. Even the Stoics, who emphasized detachment, acknowledged that material resources should be engaged wisely, without becoming binding or distracting.

The third aim, paralleling Kaam, is **moderated desire and enjoyment**—the cultivation of pleasures, creativity, love, and aesthetic fulfillment in life. Greek philosophy did not reject human desire but advised measured engagement. Aristotle's doctrine of the "Golden Mean" teaches balance: pleasures and appetites must be regulated by reason and virtue. Similarly, Epicurean thought emphasizes the enjoyment of life through simple and mindful pleasures, avoiding excess or attachment, echoing the Eastern idea that desire is natural but must not dominate the soul.

The fourth and highest aim, comparable to Moksha, is **ultimate fulfillment, liberation, or unity with the Good**. For Plato, this is the contemplation of the Form of the Good, the eternal truth beyond the material world.



Aristotle speaks of the intellectual fulfillment of the soul as its highest activity. The Stoics describe freedom as **ataraxia**—peace of mind arising from mastery over passions and alignment with reason and nature. Here, Western philosophy converges with Eastern teachings: liberation is not mere physical pleasure or escape but the transcendence of ego, attachment, and illusion, attaining harmony with the eternal order.

Across Western texts, these four aims—ethical virtue, prosperity, moderated desire, and ultimate fulfillment—reflect a natural progression and integration similar to the Four Purusharthas of Hinduism and the Chaar Padarath in Sikhism. Ethics provide the foundation, prosperity and material well-being sustain life, desire and enjoyment enrich it, and ultimate fulfillment crowns human existence. Philosophers from Aristotle to Marcus Aurelius repeatedly emphasize that ignoring any one dimension leads to imbalance: virtue without material stability or moderation produces frustration; wealth without ethical grounding becomes harmful; desire unchecked enslaves; and the highest aim cannot be realized without a life rooted in reason and moral discipline.

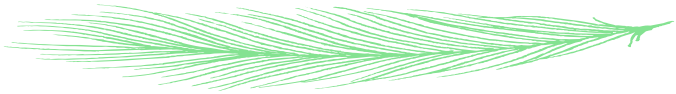
In conclusion, Western wisdom, while differing in terminology and cultural context, mirrors the timeless human quest captured by the Four Purusharthas and Chaar Padarath. Life is not merely to be endured, nor

wealth or desire to be blindly pursued. Rather, it is to be lived ethically, wisely, and consciously, with measured engagement in the world, culminating in the freedom and fulfillment of the soul. The universality of these teachings across East and West highlights the shared human aspiration: to live a life of purpose, balance, and ultimate transcendence.

Moksha as the Ultimate Aim

Most spiritual traditions of the world agree that the highest purpose of human life is liberation—freedom from bondage, suffering, and illusion. In Indic thought this is called **Moksha**, in Greek philosophy it takes the form of **Eudaimonia** or **Ataraxia**, in Christianity it is known as **Salvation**, and in Buddhism it appears as **Nirvana**. The earlier aims of Dharma, Artha, and Kama may regulate and balance worldly life, but Moksha transcends them all. It is not merely another goal, but the culmination—the state where the cycle of duty, wealth, and desire is finally transcended.

In the Hindu–Vedic tradition, the Upanishads often speak of renunciation as the direct path to liberation, captured in the profound verse of the *Isha Upanishad*: *"tena tyaktena bhunjitha"*—renounce and enjoy. The system of four ashramas, or stages of life, culminates in **Sanyaas Ashram**, where one leaves behind family, possessions, and worldly duties to seek only Moksha. Yet, the Bhagavad Gita offers a more balanced view, distinguishing between **Sanyaas**, the renunciation of action, and **Tyaga**, the renunciation of attachment. Krishna teaches that it is not escape from duties but freedom from ego and the fruits of action that is superior. Thus, Hindu scriptures present two streams: one

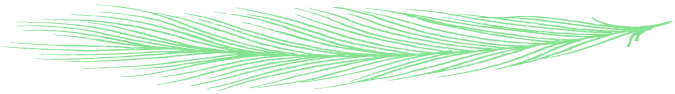


emphasizing radical renunciation, the other advocating balance through detached engagement.

Buddhism, by contrast, strongly advocates the direct path of renunciation. The Buddha himself left his palace life in an act of total Sanyaas, setting the model for seekers to transcend Artha and Kama altogether. The Eightfold Path is oriented toward Nirvana, bypassing the pursuit of wealth and pleasure, and urging detachment from worldly entanglement. Jainism, too, presents a radical vision of renunciation, emphasizing extreme asceticism, austerity, and meditation as the only means to Moksha.

Sikhism stands apart by rejecting ritualistic Sanyaas. The Gurus insisted that true Moksha lies not outside the world but within it. Guru Nanak declared: *"ghar hī mahi udāsī"* — be detached while living at home. In Guru Granth Sahib, the teaching is clear: *"sache setī ratiā sabh kujh pāvaṇā"* — those imbued with Truth attain everything. Here the revolution is profound: the four Padaraths are not sequential stages where one must abandon the first three to reach the last, but an integrated life where Dharma, Artha, and Kama are lived truthfully and harmoniously, while Moksha is attained inwardly through Naam.

Greek philosophy also reflected both tendencies. The **Cynics** and later the **Stoics** advocated radical simplicity, rejecting wealth and desire in ways reminiscent of



Sanyaas. Plato's allegory of the cave presents the philosopher as one who turns away from worldly shadows to contemplate the Eternal. Yet Aristotle offered a counterbalance: his concept of **Eudaimonia** required the practice of virtue within society, not in withdrawal. In this, he comes closer to the Gita and Sikhism, where the integrated path is favored.

If the Chaar Padarath framework presents a natural progression—Dharma leading to Artha, to Kama, and finally to Moksha—then the traditions of renunciation illustrate the possibility of leaping directly to Moksha, bypassing the earlier aims. Two models thus emerge. One is the **integrated path of the householder**, seen in Sikhism, in the Gita's teaching of karma yoga, and in Aristotle's balanced ethics. The other is the **renunciate path of Sanyaas**, exemplified in Buddhism, Jainism, the ascetic currents of the Upanishads, and the simplicity of Stoicism.

Both models are acknowledged in scripture. The Gita honors the spirit of renunciation but upholds detached action as higher. Sikhism resolves the tension by teaching renunciation of attachment, not renunciation of society. Western thought likewise carries both voices: the Stoic call for detachment from passions, and Aristotle's vision of balanced flourishing within the world.

The convergence is striking. Whether one chooses the path of the householder or of the renunciate, the essence is the same: freedom from attachment, ego, and desire. Moksha is the common horizon, the state of true liberation. In this sense, Sanyaas is not mere escape from responsibility but the inner state of detachment that allows the soul to transcend the first three Padaraths and rest in the Eternal. One may live in the world or withdraw from it; the real question is whether one has transcended bondage. In both East and West, the answer is clear—the soul's ultimate destiny is liberation, and the paths, though different, converge in the same truth.

The Four Treasures and the Forgotten Aim

I have long sensed a troubling distortion in how the philosophy of **Chaar Padarath**—the four treasures of human life—is lived today. Sikhism and Hinduism both teach that these four treasures—**Dharma, Artha, Kaam, Moksha**—are to be realized through righteous living and the guidance of a Perfect Guru. Yet, too often devotees wear their identity as a label, proclaiming themselves Sikh or Hindu, while focusing solely on **Artha** (material gain) and **Kaam** (worldly desire), neglecting **Dharma** (righteousness) and **Moksha** (liberation). In doing so, they not only distort the teachings but inch closer to disobedience of the Perfect Guru—a disobedience that can bring suffering in this life and beyond.

The **Guru Granth Sahib** warns of this pitfall:

“ਖਸਮੁ ਵਿਸਾਰਿ ਕੀਏ ਰਸ ਭੋਗ, ਤਾਂ ਤਨਿ ਉਠਿ ਖਲੋਏ ਰੋਗ ॥”

Khasam visārī kīe ras bhōg, tāṅ tan uṭh khalōe rōg. Forgetting the Lord (the Master), they indulge in sensual pleasures—and in their body arise diseases that none can cure.

This warning is sharp: to forget the Guru—to disregard the Divine—and instead chase comforts and desires, leads to inner and outer sickness.

Yet the Guru does not only warn; he also provides the clear, luminous path to attain all four treasures. In Raag Gowri, Guru Arjan Dev Ji proclaims:

“ਚਾਰਿ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਜੇ ਕੋ ਮਾਗੈ ॥ ਸਾਧ ਜਨਾ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਲਾਗੈ ॥

ਜੇ ਕੋ ਆਪੁਨਾ ਦੁਖੁ ਮਿਟਾਵੈ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਰਿਦੈ ਸਦ ਗਾਵੈ ॥

ਜੇ ਕੋ ਅਪੁਨੀ ਸੋਭਾ ਲੋਰੈ ॥ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਇਹ ਹਉਮੈ ਛੋਰੈ ॥

ਜੇ ਕੋ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਤੇ ਡਰੈ ॥ ਸਾਧ ਜਨਾ ਕੀ ਸਰਨੀ ਪਰੈ ॥

ਜਿਸੁ ਜਨ ਕਉ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਦਰਸ ਪਿਆਸਾ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਾ ਕੈ ਬਲਿ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਸਾ ॥੫॥”

Chār padārath je ko māgai, sādh janā kī sevā lāgai.
Je ko āpuna dukh miṭāvai, Har Har nām riḍai sad gāvai.
Je ko apunī sobhā lorai, sādhsaṅg iha haumai choṛai.
Je ko janam maraṇ te ḍarai, sādh janā kī saraṇī parai.
Jis jan kau Prabh daras piāsā, Nānak tā kai bal bal jāsā. ||5||

Meaning: *If one desires the four Padaraths (Dharma, Artha, Kaam, Moksha), he should engage in the service of the Saints. If one wishes to erase his pain, he should sing the Name of the Lord constantly in his heart. If one longs for glory, he should abandon ego in the company of Saints. If one fears birth and death, he*

should seek refuge at the feet of the Holy. For the one who thirsts for the Lord's Vision, says Nanak, I would gladly dedicate my life again and again.

In contrast to superficial religiosity, this Shabad crystalizes the living, integrated path. The four Padaraths are not to be chased through ritual or empty labels, but through the transformative presence of the Guru's path—through humility, devotion, remembrance, and surrender.

The Hindu scriptures present the same framework of **Purusharthas**. The **Bhagavad Gita (3:35)** declares: **"श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठितात्।"** *Better is one's own dharma, though imperfect, than the dharma of another, well performed.* This establishes Dharma as the foundation on which the other Padaraths must stand.

Similarly, the **Bhagavad Gita (18:66)** lifts the seeker to the highest aim:**"सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज।"** *Abandon all lesser dharmas and surrender to Me alone.* Here Dharma culminates in surrender to the Divine, leading to Moksha—the same teaching that Sikhism crystallizes in Naam.

The **Isha Upanishad (1)** also counsels: **"तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा।"** *Renounce and yet enjoy.* This paradox expresses the balance of Artha and Kaam—

attained truthfully and without clinging—so they do not bind the soul but prepare it for Moksha.

Thus, whether through the Guru's command in Sikhism or the Shruti's counsel in Sanatan Dharma, the principle is one: the treasures of life must be sought through Dharma, purified in remembrance of the Divine, and crowned by Moksha.

But herein lies the failure of many followers today. They stop midway. They wear Dharma as a badge, as mere identity—"I am Hindu, I am Sikh"—yet they pursue only wealth and desire, rarely yearning for Moksha. This is not merely a mistake; it is a tragic reversal of the Guru's intent. By ignoring the final aim, they disobey the Guru's living wisdom. The Guru Granth Sahib warns that indulgence without remembrance leads to decay, while the saints show that only service, humility, and Naam bring true fulfilment of all Padaraths.

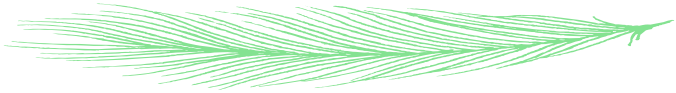
Essence

The philosophy of Chaar Padarath becomes hollow when lived superficially—when Dharma is assumed, Artha and Kaam are indulged in, and Moksha is forgotten. Hinduism and Sikhism both proclaim that all four are to be attained under the guiding light of Dharma and the living Guru. The **Bhagavad Gita** confirms that duties

must lead to surrender; the **Upanishads** remind us to renounce attachment even while enjoying; and the **Guru Granth Sahib** reveals that all four Padaraths flow from Naam alone.

The remedy is clear: if one truly desires the four treasures, one must follow the Shabad: serve saints, live righteously, sing Naam, shed ego, and surrender to the Divine. This is true obedience to the Perfect Guru. Only then can the seeker be free of troubles here and attain the bliss of Moksha hereafter.

May we not merely desire the treasures, but walk the Guru's path to receive them—complete, pure, and eternal.



The Four Treasures & The Five Means of Devotion

The philosophy of human life can be seen as a map of both goals and means. In Sikh thought and the Sant tradition, two great streams of wisdom guide the seeker: the teaching of the Chaar Padarath—the four treasures or attainments of life—and the five means of devotion as taught in Paramhans Advait Mat. Each stands complete in itself, yet when seen together they form a luminous picture: the Padaraths define the aims of life, and the five means of devotion outline the path to reach them.

The Guru Granth Sahib speaks often of the Chaar Padarath, the four treasures sought by humanity across time and culture. The first is **Dharam**, righteousness, the practice of truth, compassion, and duty. Without Dharma, life loses its very foundation. The second is **Arth**, honest livelihood and material prosperity, but not for selfishness alone; rather, wealth must be earned truthfully and used for service and sharing. The third is **Kaam**, the fulfillment of desires, the natural energies of human life, but always moderated by Dharma so that they uplift rather than enslave. Finally, the highest treasure is **Moksh**, liberation—the soul's release from bondage and its union

with the Divine. Gurbani crystallizes this in a single line:
“ਧਰਮ ਅਰਥ ਕਾਮ ਮੋਖ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਨਾਮੇ ਹੀ ਤੇ ਪਾਏ ॥”

All four—Dharma, Artha, Kaam, Moksha—are obtained only through remembrance of the Naam. Thus, Dharma is the root, Moksha the fruit, and both are bound together through the living remembrance of the Divine Name.

The Sant tradition of Shri Paramhans Advait Mat prescribes another set of guiding lights: the **five means of devotion**. These are not merely outer forms but inner disciplines that align life with Truth. The first is **Shri Aarti–Puja**, reverence and worship that awaken humility and surrender to the Divine. The second is **Seva**, selfless service, offering body and mind in surrender, performing actions without ego or claim. The third is **Satsang**, the company of saints and seekers, where the words of Truth are heard and absorbed into the heart. The fourth is **Simran**, remembrance of the Holy Name, the repetition that draws the mind away from distraction and toward the Beloved. And the fifth is **Dhyan**, concentration, the meditative holding of the Guru’s form or the Divine Light within the mind’s eye. These five, simple to name but profound in practice, are the means by which consciousness is purified and aligned with the Eternal.

Placed side by side, the four treasures and the five means reveal their inner connection. Dharma is established and deepened through Satsang and Seva; in the company of saints and in service, pride dissolves and life aligns with righteousness. Artha, wealth, becomes purified through Seva as well, for when earnings are directed to charity, Sangat, and service, prosperity is no longer a chain but a blessing. Kaam, the energy of desire, is redirected through Simran and Dhyan; what once turned outward as craving is lifted inward as yearning for God, the fire of desire becoming the flame of devotion. And Moksh, the ultimate aim, is realized through the spirit of Shri Aarti–Puja, where the soul bows in complete surrender, transcends individuality, and merges into the Infinite.

In this way the five means of devotion serve as keys that unlock the four Padarath. They transform the path of the householder into the path of the saint. A seeker may remain amidst family and worldly duties, yet inwardly free, detached, and steadily progressing from Dharma toward Moksha. Outwardly engaged, inwardly surrendered; outwardly serving, inwardly remembering—this balance becomes the way of the gurumukh.